

APPROVED: Meeting No. 14-96

ATTEST: *Paula S. Jewell*

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
Meeting No. 10-96

March 12, 1996

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland, convened in Worksession in the Council Chamber, Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland on March 12, 1996 at 7:08 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Rose G. Krasnow

Councilmember Robert E. Dorsey

Councilmember James T. Marrinan

Councilmember Glennon J. Harrison

Councilmember Robert J. Wright

In attendance: City Manager Rick Kuckkahn and City Clerk Paula Jewell.

Also present were Deputy City Manager Julia Novak and Recreation and Parks

Department Director Burt Hall.

Re: Worksession with the Recreation
and Park Advisory Board

The Mayor and Council convened in Worksession with Recreation and Park Advisory Board Chairman Stephen Edwards and board members Robert Taylor, Paula Strain, F. Terry Baker, Dirk Schenck, Maureen Quinn, Paul Shields, Louis Cornet, and Charles Carrocio. The following topics were discussed with the Mayor and Council.

1. King Farm Parks, Recreation, Open Space Issues - Mr. Carrocio said that at the last Recreation and Park Board meeting, the members outlined some concerns for how the King Farm would be developed:

- Protection of the Watts Branch Stream.
- The importance of determining the type of recreational facilities to be developed on the King Farm.
- Dedication of passive parkland to the City and the issue of access to that parkland.
- The impact of concrete drainage pipes in the City's streams and the methods used for increasing storm water capacity for the proposed homes on the King Farm site. Will these destroy the stream? Mr. Hall said that staff will study all possible alternatives (i.e., a sewage storage facility with a pump) and will keep in mind those options which would cause minimum impact to the stream.

2. Bikeway Study - The City hired a consultant group to look at the 1981 Bikeway plan, and the Board would like the developer to wait for the consultant's study which is due back in July or August. The Bikeway plan had been around for sixteen years but was not in use because there was no right-of-way for the bikeway; the new study will address the issue. Councilmember Wright said that he hoped the study would include a plan for locating areas for bikers to park their cars, remove their bikes and ride the trails. Councilmember Dorsey suggested painting some type of line markings on the ground to mark where the available bike paths were.

Councilmember Harrison asked how the houses and barns on the King Farm site would be preserved. Mr. Hall responded that the structures would be costly to convert or replace as modern-use buildings, however, he said that the developers plan to

maintain tenants in the existing houses. Mayor Krasnow suggested that staff get this provision in writing from the developers. Councilmember Dorsey said that he had received an inquiry about the possibility for preserving some of the site as a working/learning farm. Mr. Hall said that the idea was worth considering, and the Mayor and Council agreed that staff should develop a feasibility plan.

3. Enhancements to Recreation Facilities - City of Rockville recreation programs are in desperate need of gym facilities. The Board asked the Mayor and Council to carefully consider the Gude Drive gym facility. The Mark Twain School athletic park is a wonderful facility that has been proposed for northeast Rockville, and the Board asked the Mayor and Council to move the project up on the CIP list as it would provide a badly needed area for female sports activities. Mayor Krasnow noted that the project had been moved up as far as it could go. The Twinbrook Recreation Center originally scheduled for funding in Fiscal Year 1997-98 is now being recommended for funding in Fiscal Year 2000. Planning for the Gude Drive facility will take place in Fiscal Year 1997 with construction in Fiscal Year 1998. Councilmember Harrison said that the greater need was in the Twinbrook neighborhood because the neighborhood is currently underserved and a gym would be within walking distance for many residents. Councilmember Dorsey said that thought needed to be given to a parking plan at the Twinbrook facility, and he said the residents should also be encouraged to walk or to bike to the facility. It was recommended that the Board talk to the Twinbrook Citizen Association leaders to see what the neighborhood needs were.

4. Recreation Program Issues - Mr. Baker expressed concern regarding the

City's relatively low budgets over a period of time and the effect they will have on the quality of services provided. He said the Mayor and Council will ultimately have to come to grips with the issue. Mayor Krasnow agreed and said that the Mayor and Council fully understand that a tax increase might be necessary in the City's future.

5. Rock Terrace High School - The Recreation and Park Board expressed hope that the City would be inclined to obtain this site. Mayor Krasnow said that the issue was recently discussed with the Montgomery County Council, and the Mayor and Council indicated that they were indeed interested in the site. County staff is scheduled to report back to the City on the matter.

6. Rockville Baseball Association (RBBA) - The Board is working on a proposal for a Fall baseball program, which they feel will not impact other Fall sports programs.

The Worksession with the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Re: Worksession with the Landlord-Tenant Affairs Commission

The Mayor and Council met with Chairman Edward Gonzague and commission members Aaron Dodek, Mary Vaarwerk, Donald Wallesz, William Silverman, Joseph Bradley, Mark Boyland, Dianne Fasolina. Also in attendance was the Commission's staff liaison Bill Dukes, Community Development Director Neal Herst and Assistant Chief of Economic Development Ed Duffy.

1. Annual Report on Staff Activities - Mr. Gonzague reported that in 1995, the Commission received 783 landlord/tenant complaints. Five hundred and nine

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were from tenants and 274 were from landlords. This represents an increase of 10 percent compared to calendar year 1994, when the Commission received 705 total complaints.

Approximately 30 percent of the calls involved security deposits, 20 percent involved lease inquiries, and other inquiries involved code questions, eviction procedures, rent increases, etc. Of these calls, 20 became formal complaints and one case was held as a formal hearing. Mr. Gonzague said that the Commission seldom had to meet because Mr. Dukes served the Commission very capably.

Councilmember Dorsey inquired how the City of Rockville compared in terms of local trends and Mr. Dukes responded that Rockville was right in line with other jurisdictions. The Commission distributed copies of a report entitled "Frequently Asked Landlord-Tenant Questions;" a booklet distributed to new landlords and tenants. Ms. Vaarwerk said that as a landlord, she felt that most landlords believed the City was fair and that the License and Inspection Services Division also did a good and fair job. Mr. Boyland indicated that he was a tenant and he remarked that the City's system and process worked wonderfully. He said that the City needed to publicize information that landlords must register their leases with the City. The Mayor and Council and Commission discussed ideas, e.g., publicizing notices in water bills and putting an article in Rockville Reports. Mayor Krasnow suggested that notices also be sent to all homeowner associations. Mr. Gonzague noted that Montgomery County recently went through the process for licensing rental units and he suggested that the County's program could be used as a model. Mr. Duffy said that the City could also have the City Attorney's Office develop a model lease for Rockville properties. Ms. Fasolina suggested that the City may

also want to solicit the help of the Montgomery County Association of Realtors.

2. Commission Vacancies - The Commission asked for the Mayor and Council's assistance in filling two recently turned-over positions on the Commission -- a tenant vacancy and an alternate tenant vacancy. City Clerk Paula Jewell noted that the vacancies were recently advertised and she suggested that the City's Public Information Office could also prepare a press release to more widely advertise the vacancies.

3. Development of King Farm - Mayor Krasnow said that the City would be expecting an increase in rental properties from the proposed development. Mr. Duffy will update the Landlord-Tenant Commission on the proposals and concepts for developing the King Farm. Ms. Fasolina commented that Bill Dukes was doing a fantastic job and she said that it was wonderful that the City had a landlord tenant affairs program.

Re: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, the Worksession with the Landlord-Tenant Commission adjourned at 8:40 p.m., to reconvene in Public Hearing on March 15, 1996 at 7:30 p.m., or at the call of the Mayor.